



# How IYPs Drive Citation Accuracy for Local SEO Benefits & Improved Consumer Search Experience

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A 1,500 retail location study conducted over eight months demonstrates the impact of a dedicated Internet Yellow Pages (IYPs) strategy, with 56.7% and 25% improved local business citation accuracy across directories and major search engines, respectively.

Pew Research revealed recently that as of 2015, 86% of U.S. adults between the ages of 18-29 owned a smartphone<sup>1</sup>. As further evidence of our reliance on data in our moments of need, this proliferation of smartphone usage has surpassed desktop search, according to a report by comScore<sup>2</sup>. Consumers actively and increasingly rely on the Internet to deliver accurate local business information to answer their immediate needs.

Yet brands aren't consistently delivering the types of results consumers crave. Outdated store hours, incorrect location

information and other inaccuracies in local business listings have serious consequences. Poor consumer experiences, lost customers, reputation issues and missed opportunities for revenue can all be attributed to incorrect online business listings.

Internet Yellow Pages (IYPs) and directories have long been a way for local businesses to list pertinent location information including NAP (name, address, phone number). They aren't glamorous, but when used strategically, these data aggregators are an important facet of a comprehensive local SEO strategy and send powerfully positive signals back to search engines including Google and Bing. Distributing your business data through IYPs generates additional references to your brand's name, address, phone, and business category by credible online sources.

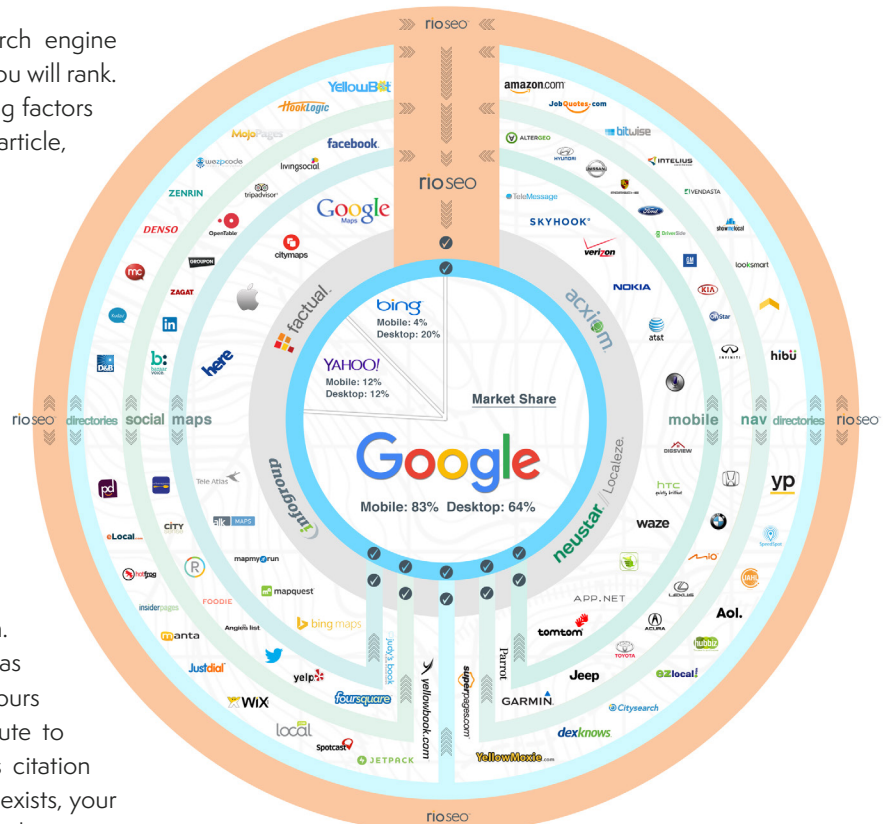
## The Challenge and Opportunity of IYPs

As citations are a major factor for establishing search engine ranking, the more citations your brand has, the better you will rank. In fact, Google released an updated help file on ranking factors for Google My Business in April 2016. According to the article, there are three factors that impact local ranking:

- relevance,
- distance,
- and prominence.

While relevance and distance are subject to a user's search and location, prominence is directly related to citation management. The more popular your brand is as determined by volume and quality of its citations, the better your results will be in relevant search results.

Yet as important as citations are in achieving top search results, brands often struggle to ensure their accuracy and consistency across the local search ecosystem. Citation management is a perpetual challenge as business locations close down or new stores open, hours change, service areas vary and other factors contribute to an increasingly disparate data set. While the reasons citation errors arise can vary, as long as incorrect location data exists, your hyper-connected customers are susceptible to receiving the wrong information the moment your brand and their needs intersect.



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<sup>1</sup> U.S. News: Smartphones are taking over the U.S.: <http://www.usnews.com/news/blogs/data-mine/2015/10/30-smartphones-are-taking-over-the-us>  
<sup>2</sup> Google: How to improve your local ranking on Google: <https://support.google.com/business/answer/7091>

# Solving for Citation Accuracy Across the Local Search Ecosystem

To measure the true impact of a proper IYP strategy, Rio SEO performed an 8-month client study. We paid specific attention to the following well-known IYPs: CitySearch, DexKnows, InsiderPages, Local.com, Superpages, YellowBot, YellowPages, and Yelp.

We regularly submit listing data on behalf of our clients to Google, Bing, and data aggregators. Yahoo, on the other hand, is not a publisher that can be updated directly. Instead, we use data aggregators to impact Yahoo search results and in the results of our study, you will see the true power that data aggregators and their massive networks can have.

Automating the usually time consuming and repetitive task of manually ensuring location accuracy is one of Rio SEO's specialties. In this instance, our Listing Management team worked on improving IYP and search engine results for all of this client's more than 1,000 locations. On a monthly basis all incorrect business listing data was analyzed, corrected, then resubmitted to the offending publisher and IYP.

The study began on July 1, 2015 with an average IYP accuracy percentage of 53.1%. Search engine citation accuracy was also measured for Google, Bing, and Yahoo, establishing a baseline from the same starting date with an average accuracy percentage of 76.6%.

## Results

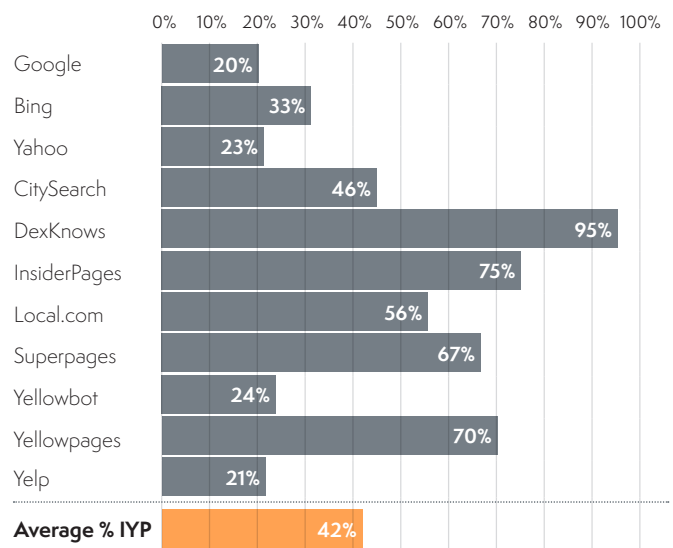
On March 1, 2016, we pulled the data again and found that **average citation accuracy had increased to 80.3%**, a better than 56% increase across the top directories in the U.S.

Equally impressive is the impact this increase had on search engine result pages. In achieving a **95.5% average citation accuracy percentage across Google, Bing, and Yahoo**, we saw an overall lift of 25% among search engines.

Beyond these already impressive results, the specific significance here is the impact IYPs can have on citation accuracy amongst web publishers. As previously mentioned, Rio SEO does not have the ability to push corrected location data to Yahoo via API, but instead utilizes the power of IYPs to ensure location data accuracy across all relevant web portals. By submitting accurate location data through IYPs, **we achieved 93.6% Yahoo search citation accuracy**, translating to a 23% increase and thus proving the value of implementing IYPs into your SEO strategy.

### Increase to Citation Accuracy

(7/1/2015 - 3/1/2016)



## Takeaways

- ▶ An effective local search strategy requires consistent, ongoing citation management to produce optimal effect.
- ▶ Brands benefit from ensuring hypermobile consumers are just a click away from the desired transaction in their moments of need.
- ▶ Used strategically, IYPs can be a powerful addition to your local SEO efforts.
- ▶ The proper use of IYPs dramatically improves citation accuracy across directories and major search engines including Google, Bing, and Yahoo.
- ▶ Citation accuracy is simplified and made more timely and effective by automating local listing management for more frequent updates across the local search ecosystem.

## About Rio SEO

Rio SEO simplifies complex local search marketing to convert searches into sales. We partner with global, multi-location brands to optimize local listings and content across every major search engine, on every device. With scalable, cost-efficient search solutions on a full-service platform, we do more than list your business – we give it prime real estate.

Rio SEO works with major brands to increase local site visibility and drive local revenue. We partner with more than 100 retailers and service providers with 50+ locations and proudly maintain a 93 percent client retention rate. Our customers love us because we get results.